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DECORATIVE WORK FOR LADIES,

A series of illustrations, with descriptive and instructive articles, we commence in this number, publishing them simultaneously with *The Ladies' Journal of Decoration*, of Manchester, England. We believe that the series will be valuable and interesting.

SCREEN PAINTED IN WATER COLORS.

This hand-screen may be painted on paper or on parchment, but it is better to use silk, satin, or, especially, silken gauze. The latter, if used, must previously be mounted and stretched by some one in the trade, this being to amateurs a very difficult operation. The gauze should first be covered with a paste of gelatine, made by dissolving about two drachms of gelatine in a quarter of a pint of warm water; it is to be used warm, and spread with a large soft brush. The white gelatine, such as is used for making jellies, is most suitable. The gauze, being thus prepared, must be placed on the drawing, and the outline traced

of seaweed, of which may be made, properly dried, pretty pictures which will appear to have been painted if treated as follows: First, place the seaweed between two sheets of blotting paper to remove the moisture, then change the paper, giving the seaweed the desired shape and put it in the shade in a warm place so that it may dry as quickly as possible. Now begins the delicate part of the operation.

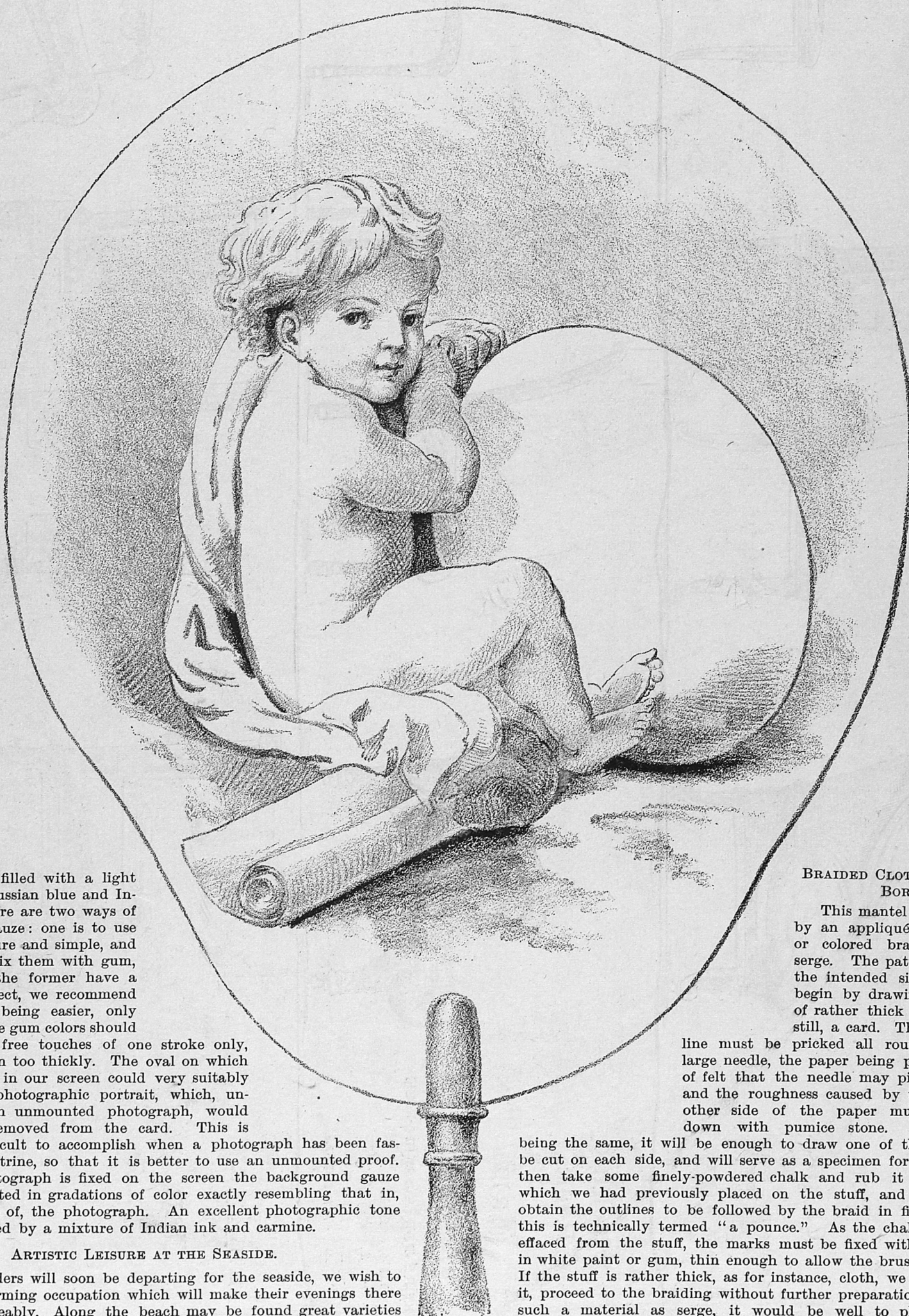
Take a piece of white Bristol paper as thick as possible, and sprinkle it with stearine powder by means of a box pierced with holes like a dredger, taking care that the powder lies as equally as possible. The dried seaweed must now be arranged on this bed of powdered stearine in the exact shape which it is to occupy, and placed on a white iron plate hot enough to melt the stearine slowly until it becomes liquid enough to run, being then cooled again almost immediately.

When the cooling begins, a heavy weight must be placed on the plate that the pressure may be

equal all over, and after half an hour, the weight being raised with care, the seaweed will be found to be completely embedded in the stearine.

A very pretty collection of seaweeds can thus be made without their colors altering perceptibly, but this process answers only with fine seaweed, and the bed of stearine must be thin, so that in melting it does not cover the plant. With a little practice and care a most satisfactory result will soon be obtained.

Whilst on the subject of artistic pastimes for the seaside, we might notice the subject of painting on pebbles. On a pebble simply cleansed with water for painting, it often happens that the colors crack when dry, but this difficulty can be removed by soaking the pebble for a day or two in a mixture of one part chlorohydric acid and ten parts water, and then washing it in pure water. This will remove the coating of lime on the pebble which causes the painting to crack.



with a brush filled with a light mixture of Prussian blue and Indian ink. There are two ways of painting on gauze: one is to use water colors pure and simple, and the other to mix them with gum, and, though the former have a very pretty effect, we recommend the latter as being easier, only adding that the gum colors should be used with free touches of one stroke only, and not laid on too thickly. The oval on which the child rests in our screen could very suitably be used for a photographic portrait, which, unless it were an unmounted photograph, would need to be removed from the card. This is sometimes difficult to accomplish when a photograph has been fastened with dextrine, so that it is better to use an unmounted proof. When the photograph is fixed on the screen the background gauze should be painted in gradations of color exactly resembling that in, or growing out of, the photograph. An excellent photographic tone can be obtained by a mixture of Indian ink and carmine.

ARTISTIC LEISURE AT THE SEASIDE.

As our readers will soon be departing for the seaside, we wish to mention a charming occupation which will make their evenings there pass very agreeably. Along the beach may be found great varieties

BRAIDED CLOTH FOR MANTEL BORDER.

This mantel border is formed by an appliqué of broad white or colored braid on cloth or serge. The pattern given is half the intended size; so we must begin by drawing it on a sheet of rather thick paper, or, better still, a card. This done, the out-

line must be pricked all round with a very large needle, the paper being placed on a piece of felt that the needle may pierce more easily, and the roughness caused by the pricks on the other side of the paper must be smoothed down with pumice stone. All the notches

being the same, it will be enough to draw one of them, which must be cut on each side, and will serve as a specimen for the others. We then take some finely-powdered chalk and rub it on the drawing which we had previously placed on the stuff, and in this way we obtain the outlines to be followed by the braid in fine lines of dots; this is technically termed "a pounce." As the chalk would be soon effaced from the stuff, the marks must be fixed with a brush dipped in white paint or gum, thin enough to allow the brush to move freely. If the stuff is rather thick, as for instance, cloth, we can, by doubling it, proceed to the braiding without further preparation. But in using such a material as serge, it would be well to place between the



DESIGN FOR THE DECORATION OF PLAQUES. See page 57.

doubled stuff a sheet of thick brown paper, and sew through it at the same time as the braid. Without this precaution the braid is liable to pucker the serge and spoil the appearance.

SKETCH FOR BIRTHDAY OR CHRISTMAS CARDS.

Our readers being generally familiar with flower painting it is needless to describe the way in which this bouquet of roses, pansies, and sweet peas should be painted, though one little innovation may be suggested which is very effective. After having copied the design on the card, the outline should be followed on a piece of tracing paper, and this should then be pasted on the back of some white velvet which is to be cut out and gummed in its place on the drawing. Gum arabic must not be used for this purpose, but a little starch, as being less likely to be loosened by the water necessary for use in painting on velvet. Starch paste must be boiled until it becomes transparent, or it will not stick well. The velvet, being fastened on the card, should be painted with colors mixed with flake white and much diluted with water; this will cause them to sink into the velvet. The flowers painted thus will have a charming softness, but the velvet must be joined as exactly as possible to the rest of the group, so that our device may not be discovered.

PAINTED TAPESTRY.

Painting on linen, in imitation of tapestry, has now been in vogue for some years, and constitutes a most agreeable employment for ladies possessing a knowledge of painting, as well as of drawing. In former days tapestry was painted with special colors, which had the disadvantage of fading very quickly; instead of these, it is better to use oil paints, without the addition either of oil of cloves or drying oil, and the colors can be diluted by essence of lavender, with, if desired, a few drops of siccativ of Courtrai. Essence of lavender may be procured from any druggist or colorman. The colors should be laid on rather lightly to avoid clogging the grain of the linen; even in the highest tones the painting must not be dense. The best linen to use is called in the trade "Point Gobelins," and this, being *écru*, naturally gives to the colors the faded tone of old tapestry. It is of French manufacture.

In executing the given sketch of tapestry, the linen must first be stretched on a frame of the required size; then the subject, after having been placed with chalk, must be drawn carefully with charcoal, and all the outlines very exactly traced; then, with a thinly diluted mixture of ivory black

and red ochre, the charcoal outlines must be followed, so that the lines are preserved as in old tapestry. Afterwards we proceed in the ordinary manner, painting the shadows always of uniform tone, that the design may present the appearance of a drawing.

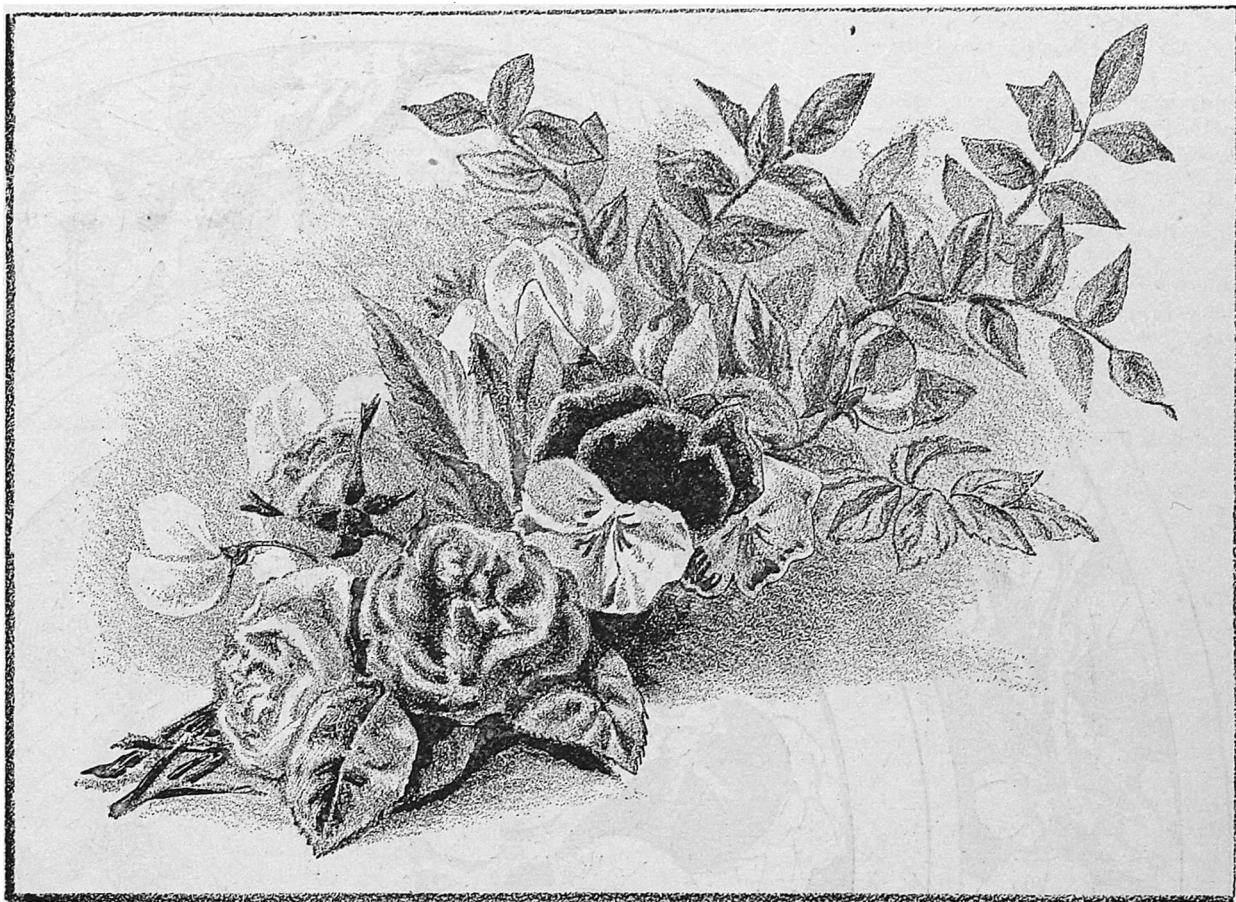
It is wise to consult old tapestry in choosing colors, of which the number used is so comparatively limited that it would not be difficult to prepare a palette suitable for all the tapestry that we could wish to paint. In the sketch given this month the border, whether in natural colors or in gray, must be treated very vigorously, so as to make a good frame for the principal subject. A very good effect is produced by backgrounds painted in shades of gray, and the size of the painting must be decided according to the purpose for which it is intended.

DESIGN FOR A FAN.

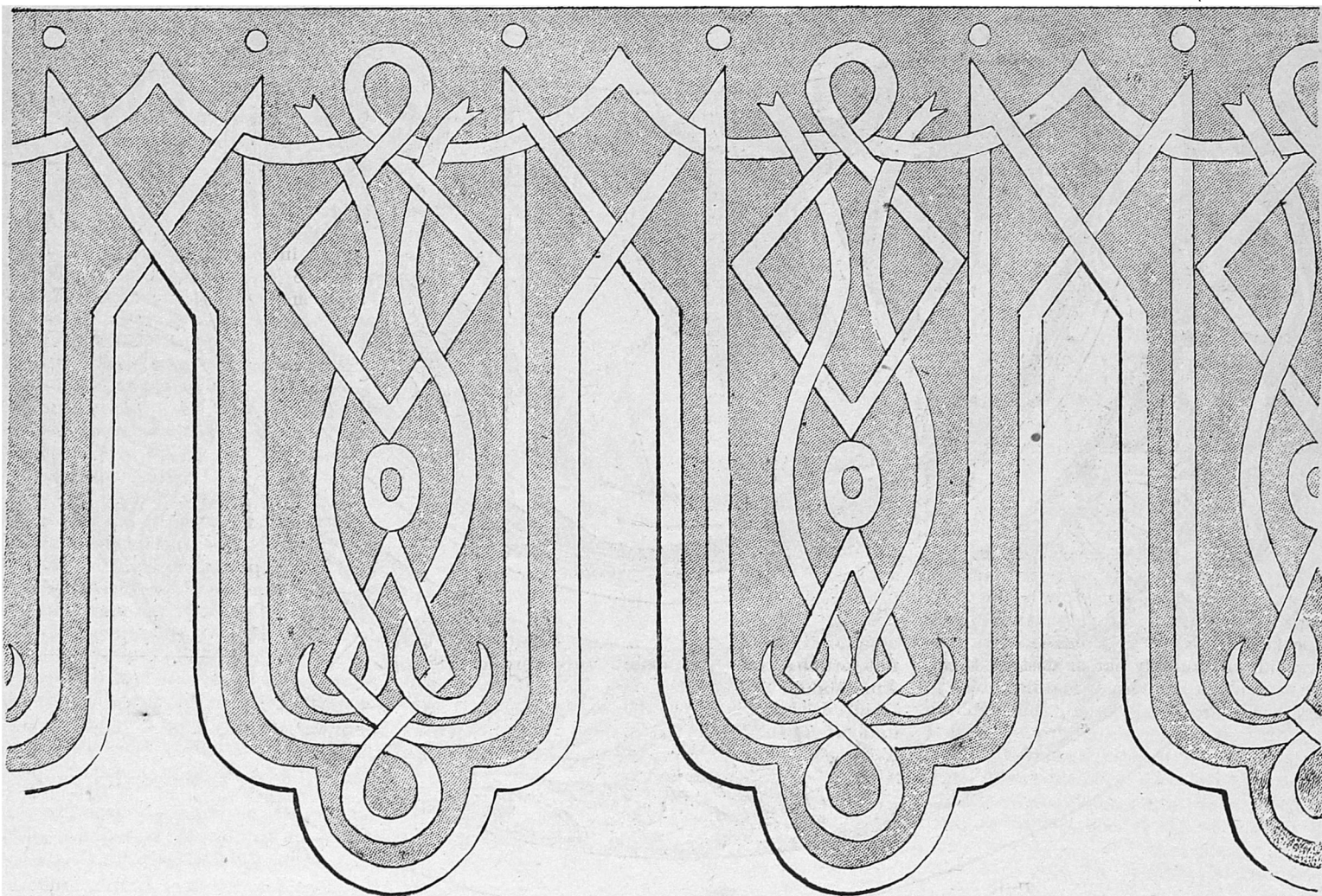
This fan may be painted on silk faille, on satin, or on parchment. In the choice of the faille or the satin it is necessary to pay great attention

to the general tone of the subject. If it is to be painted in natural tones, the preference should be given to a material of garnet, cerise or gray, as they throw up better the tones of the landscape. The scene, which might be entitled "The Kiss," is in the Spring time, when the buds begin to burst, and when nature awakens to smile on man. The leaves of the trees, therefore, should not be too full, but of varied and tender greens, not mixed with autumn tints. Care must be taken to avoid crudeness, and in the sketch to use complements of light tones—gray, blue and violet, so that the landscape when finished may offer to the eye that softness peculiar to nature at the time when leaves are opening.

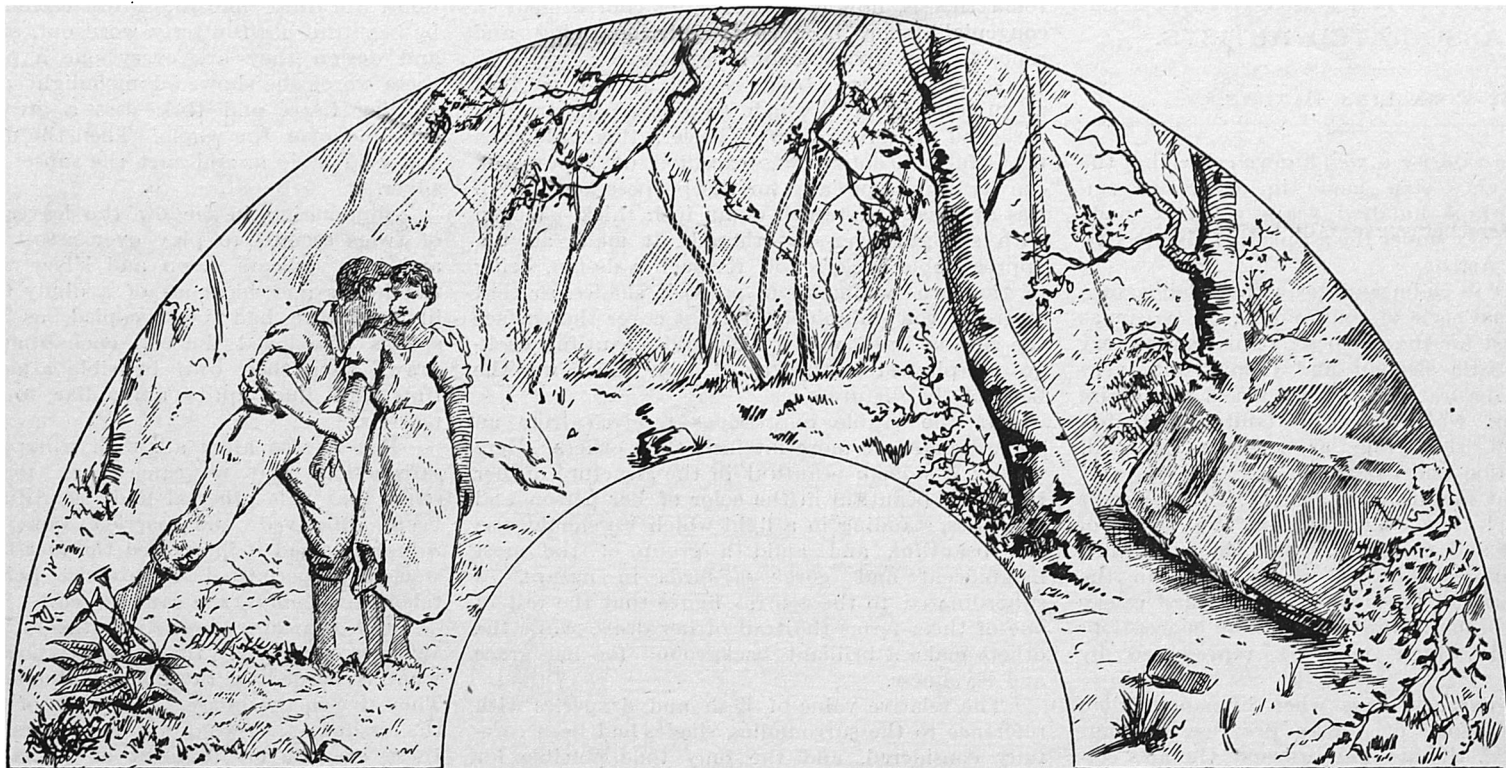
In the drawing and painting of the two figures great simplicity should be shown, and that minute finish which painters of fans often affect should be avoided. The movement should be very correct, the shadows well in their places, sufficient to indicate the shape without being too pronounced. It must not be forgotten that the figures being in the open air are not subjected to strong contrasts of



DESIGN FOR A CARD.



DESIGN FOR DRAPERY OF A MANTEL BORDER.



DESIGN FOR FAN PAINTING.

light and shade, as they would be if painted under the light of the studio. The effect must be secured by the vigor of the general tone of the figures standing out against the subdued tints of the landscape. The two figures should give the idea of people who live in the country, and consequently it would be an error to paint them in tones fresh and bright like the fancy shepherds seen on the fans of last century.

If, instead of painting the fan in natural colors, any of our readers should prefer to do it in gray, or any one color, they would find it much easier, and they would also have more freedom in choosing the color of the silk. In this case black silk or satin might be favorably employed. As a general rule it is a mistake to lay on much color, as the folds of the fan cause it, when too thick, to deteriorate very quickly. One way to keep the paint from cracking is to mix it with beer. If the fan is to be painted on parchment the colors should be used with as little water as possible, or the sheet of parchment will become warped and render the work very difficult.

Our sketch is half the intended size, but amateurs, by dividing it into squares, will find it quite easy to copy. This is done by drawing on the original, and on the larger space destined for the copy, a corresponding number of squares, and then carefully copying the drawing square by square, which causes the enlargement to be obtained with very little trouble. To avoid tracing the squares on the original, one can make use of some of the sheets of clear gelatine which are used by lithographers for tracing their designs on stone, and sold by makers of lithographic appliances. In this case the squares must be traced on the gelatine with an H.B. pencil. The drawing can be seen perfectly through the sheet of gelatine thus divided, and that it may not be displaced, it should be fastened at the four corners with drawing pins.

ETCHING ON POT OR TILE.

In etching upon china or earthenware by means of powerful acids, great care is requisite in mixing and laying on of the grounds, so as to enable them to effectually resist the action of the acid. There are several mixtures used for making etching grounds, and in this, as in everything else, each artist has some specialty which he thinks better than any other. We shall here give what we have found to be the best resisting medium for the purpose. (Design shown on page 55).

ON GROUNDS.

The essential qualities of a good ground are—First, a complete and perfect resistance to the action of the acid. Second, a perfectly smooth and level surface, totally free from grit, dust, or other foreign substance—that is essential, for if there be specks of dirt or grit mixed with the ground, the acid will quickly eat or destroy them, and then it eats away the china, making holes in places where they are not wanted, thus spoiling the work. Third, a good etching ground should be firm, so as to allow the tracings to be made upon it, yet not brittle, but sufficiently soft to be easily removed by a scraper or needle point. Fourth, the ground should be easily removed and reapplied.

Rembrandt, the celebrated painter, gives the following as a ground for etching: White wax, thirty grains; gum mastic, fifteen grains; asphal-

tum or amber, fifteen grains. The mastic and asphaltum were propounded separately in a mortar, the wax being melted in a pipkin or earthen pot, and the other ingredients were added little by little, the whole being kept well stirred until thoroughly melted and amalgamated.

A very simple and effective ground may be mixed with Brunswick black and white wax, in the proportion of about one ounce of wax to four ounces of Brunswick black, but in every case a trial should be made before commencing any important work. One of the best grounds, however, is the following: Melt beeswax in turpentine, then strain it through fine silk; let it be perfectly fluid. To this add about one-sixth of the quantity you have of the fluid wax to black Japan or Japan varnish, varying the quantity of "Japan" according to the heat of the weather, allowing more if it is hot and less if it is cold.

THE LAYING ON OF THE GROUND.

Before laying on the ground, it is necessary that all the other parts of the tile or vase should be protected from the action of the acid. This may be done by coating the back and edges of the tile, or the exposed parts, with Brunswick black or black Japan. Every part, with the exception of that upon which the ground has to be laid, should be thus treated.

THE ACID.

The acid to be used for etching on china and earthenware is the same as that used for etching on glass, viz., hydrofluoric acid.

There are two methods of using the acid, one by means of the vapor produced by placing fluor spar in a shallow vessel and pouring sulphuric acid upon it until the spar is covered. The action of acid upon the spar produces hydrofluoric acid in vapor. The article to be etched when prepared is placed over this vessel, face, or etched side downwards, and the vapor (which is the acid) condenses upon the etching and gradually eats away or corrodes the parts left exposed to its action.

The vessel with the acid in will, of course, require to be covered with cloth or wrapping, so as to prevent the fumes being wasted. The etching will have to be taken up and washed with pure water occasionally to see how the acid is doing its work and whether it has eaten deep enough or if the ground is breaking up or standing firm.

The other method of using the acid is to immerse the article in the hydrofluoric acid. For flat articles, such as tiles and plaques, the best plan will be to have an acid "well" made in the following manner. It may be made of ordinary deal or pine, being a simple square frame having a square or sunk "well" in the center, which for flat articles, may be about three inches deep. This should be strongly made and then coated inside with three or four coats of Japan black, and when this is dry it should be again coated with the black and then covered all over with thin calico while the black is wet.

The last coat of black will soften the previous coat, and the whole will form a strong glue-like substance upon which the calico must be laid perfectly straight. When this is done and dry, two or three more coats may then be put upon the canvas. By this means we get a perfectly

water and acid proof bath for our work, much better and cheaper than gutta percha or any other material.

THE METHODS OF ETCHING.

When the ground is hard enough and ready for work the design may be traced upon it by rubbing over the back of the drawing with whiting, chalk, or dry white lead. The design is laid upon the ground, and the lines are gone over with a fine point of any kind, which transfers the drawing on to the ground in white lines. We now use the etching needle, and go over the lines on the ground, removing or clearing away the ground from them and leaving the china exposed; any broad parts, such as backgrounds, may then be scraped away by using flat steel scrapers or by any other tool that will effect the purpose.

There is another process which will be found very effective for etching upon china, and may be called the brush process. The *modus operandi* is as follows: Let the tile be cleaned thoroughly with whiting, and take care not to touch it with the fingers. Now crush a soft pastille or colored crayon into a fine powder and mix it with a strong solution of white sugar; work it well with a palette knife, and then add to it a solution of ox-gall about equal in quantity to half the solution of sugar. With this solution and a sable or camel hair pencil, the lines of the drawing are painted on the tile, using it pretty freely. When this has been carefully and correctly done make a solution of the ordinary etching ground in ether, pour this upon the tile and let it drain off, then place the tile into a moderately heated oven in order to expel the ether and harden the ground. Put the plate or tile into the acid bath, and when it has stood some time brush it over gently with a feather; this will remove the sugar and gall compositions and leave the lines free for the action of the acid.

The acid should cover the tile to the depth of half an inch, and if a trial has previously been made we shall know exactly how long the tile must remain in the bath to allow the acid to bite deep enough. It should then be taken out of the bath and well washed with clean water to remove all the acid, and if it is found not to have bitten deep enough it may be put into the acid again. But if one part of the lines are not deep enough those parts that are can be stopped out or painted over with the ground or with Brunswick black alone, and again put into the bath.

When the work is done the ground may be washed or cleaned off the tile with turpentine, shist oil, or petroleum oil, the last two being the best. When clean it will then be ready for applying the colors, which process we shall describe in our concluding paper.

TO CLEAN GLASS IN PICTURE FRAMES.—To clean glass in frames with velvet plush inside, so that water cannot be used, moisten tripoli with brandy, rub it on the glass while moist, and when dry rub off with a silk cloth. To prevent the mixture injuring the plush use strips of tin bent to an angle; set these against edge of frame, with one side on glass. When the frames are of a character that will not be injured by water, rub the glass with water containing a little liquid ammonia, and polish with moist paper.